

this issue. However, I believe the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is an issue of such tremendous importance that legislation is warranted.

I hope the Majority Leader will schedule a vote on the veto message soon, and I hope my colleagues will continue to show strong support for the Iran Missile Proliferation Sanctions Act.●

TRIBUTE TO RICK METTS: 1998 GREATER DERRY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE "CITIZEN OF THE YEAR"

● Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Rick Metts of Derry, New Hampshire, on being named the 1998 "Citizen of the Year" by the Greater Derry Chamber of Commerce. Rick has earned this very special honor as a result of his many years of volunteer work for a variety of different organizations in the City of Derry.

At the Derry Village Rotary Club, Rick has been Sergeant at Arms for the past seven years and has participated in every fundraiser, project and event the club has held. As a member of the club's Social Committee, Rick has helped organize Pot-Luck suppers and Yankee Swaps, and has served as the Master of Ceremonies for Pictionary Games. Rick has also demonstrated his commitment to education, as he and his family have co-sponsored scholarships given to outstanding vocational students.

In addition to his work at the Rotary Club, Rick is also active in a number of other organizations in his community. He is currently serving his second three-year term on the Derry School Board and has held the position of Chair twice. Rick also has shown his true dedication to children through his work with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Derry. For the past two years, Rick has chaired the Club's largest fundraiser, which features a gourmet dinner as well as both a silent and live auction. He has also coached and refereed many basketball games for the club and recreation teams. Rick has also been a longtime member and supporter of the Greater Derry Chamber of Commerce.

According to one of his close friends, Rick Metts "never has to be asked, he always volunteers." The many ways Rick has found to be involved in his community are a true testament to that statement. Rick embodies that great spirit of volunteerism that helped make this nation great. I want to again congratulate Rick Metts on being named "Citizen of the Year" and it is with great pride that I represent him in the United States Senate.●

NEED FOR HMO REFORM

● Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, our health care system is in a state of crisis—a crisis of confidence. Many Americans no longer believe that their in-

surance companies can provide them with the access to care or quality of service they need.

Today I continue our series of stories describing how some managed care plans seem to have put cost saving before life-saving. The experience of Jacqueline Lee is just one more example of the pressing need for Congress to act now to protect the rights of patients.

Jacqueline Lee lives in Bethesda, Maryland. A lover of the outdoors, she took a trip to hike in the Shenandoah Mountains in the summer of 1996. While walking on one of the trails, she lost her footing, and plummeted off of a 40-foot cliff to the ground below.

Luckily for Jacqueline, she was quickly airlifted from the mountain to a hospital in Virginia. Amazingly, she survived the fall, sustaining fractures in her arms, pelvis, and her skull.

Incredibly, her HMO refused to pay the more than \$10,000 in hospital bills. They said Ms. Lee had failed to gain "pre-authorization" for her emergency room visit. To this insurer, the fact that she was unconscious was no exception. For over a year, she challenged her HMO and faced personal bankruptcy. Ultimately, the Maryland Insurance Administration ordered the insurer to pay the hospital and fined them as well for their initial refusal to cover Ms. Lee's medical expenses.

Yet her struggle wasn't over. Within a year, after follow-up surgery for her injuries, Ms. Lee found herself back in the emergency room, fearing that she was suffering complications from surgery. Not wanting to go through another ordeal, this time she called her HMO beforehand. They told her they would pay only for her screening fees because the visit was not considered "a medical emergency."

Mr. President, we must take up and pass meaningful patient protections this year. We have a bill, S. 1890, that would prevent situations like this from occurring. Under our bill, Jacqueline Lee would have access to emergency care without preauthorization, and when she feels her life is in danger—not when the insurance company tells her it's okay. Under our bill, Jacqueline would have been covered for her injuries—she would not have had the rug pulled out from under her by the HMO.

We have only a few weeks of legislative business left to act. Whatever we do will not alleviate the stress that Jacqueline Lee has endured, but we can ensure that others do not have to spend time fighting insurers that would be better spent fighting for their health. We must guarantee patients the peace of mind that comes with knowing that their health plan will be there to help them recuperate, not deny payment because it improves their bottom line.●

MEASURE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME—S. 2271

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I send to the desk a bill and ask that it be read for the first time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2271) to simplify and expedite access to the Federal courts for injured parties whose rights and privileges, secured by the United States Constitution, have been deprived by final actions of Federal agencies, or other government officials or entities acting under color of State law, and for other purposes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask for its second reading, and I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—H.R. 2431 AND H.R. 3150

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I understand that there are two bills at the desk that are due for their second reading, and I ask that the first be read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2431) to establish an Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring, to provide for the imposition of sanctions against countries engaged in a pattern of religious persecution, and for other purposes.

Mr. SESSIONS. I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time. I ask that the second bill be read.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will be placed on the calendar. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3150) to amend title 11 of the United States Code, and for other purposes.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I object to further proceedings on this matter at this time as well.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination on the Executive Calendar: Calendar No. 495.

I further ask unanimous consent that the nomination be confirmed; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Sallyanne Harper, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, Environmental Protection Agency.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now return to legislative session.